Alberta. Going strong.

Ambassadors In Action

APRIL 2007

Greetings

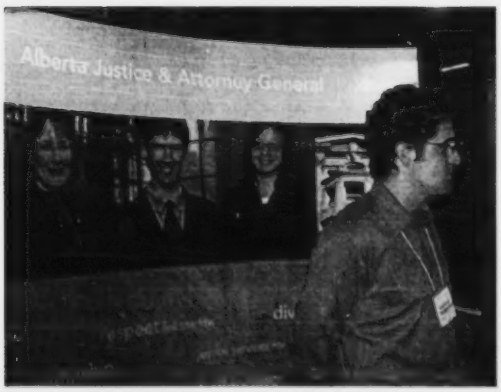
April brings spring showers, spring flowers, and a new fiscal year! As we venture into a new year and the opportunities ahead, this edition of the Ambassadors in Action Newsletter provides the opportunity for reflection and a look back at the Ambassador Program for 2006-2007. Thank you to everyone who participated in the Program and contributed to its ongoing success. I look forward to working with you in 2007-2008.

Highlights of 2006-2007

- The Ambassador membership continued to grow with 257 Ambassadors in the Program as of February 21, 2007.
- The Ambassadors in Action newsletter was published in April and August.
- An Orientation Session for new Ambassadors was held in September. Twenty-two Ambassadors attended, 6 of those via teleconference/ webcast.
- The Ambassador Program partnered with the Finance Community to provide an Orientation/Refresher for the Finance Community Ambassadors and also partnered with Solicitor General and Public Security to present a corporate overview of the Ambassador Program at Orientation Sessions for their new Ambassadors.
- The Focus on Aboriginal People Sub-team held an Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Session for Ambassadors and developed a "Focus on Aboriginal People" section for the Ambassador Toolkit which provides information and resources for Ambassadors attending Aboriginal events.
- Ambassadors participated in 20 career fairs across the province (6 of which were new), 4 University of Alberta Career Forums; 1 Round Table Session for the Grant MacEwan Student Business Association, and 1 employer panel for the University of Alberta Career and Placement Services Orientation.
- The Ambassador Program had the potential to reach over 42,000 individuals through the events that were participated in.

Ambassadors share their experiences at the New Ambassador Orientation Session.

- The Government of Alberta was promoted to University of Alberta students and alumni as a feature employer on its Career and Placement Services website in October and February.
- The Ambassador Program postcard which promotes the GoA as an employer was published in the November/December and February issues of **job***postings* magazine. **job***postings* magazine is distributed to over 160,000 students at 175+ educational institutions across Canada. The Alberta Government logo was posted on the **job***postings*.ca website during these months and linked directly to the APS Jobs website.
- Ministry specific initiatives included new Ambassador recruitment, orientation, participation in career fairs targeted to recruitment needs, presentations, mock interviews, and information interviews, and development of promotional materials including brochures, postcards, display boards, newsletter articles, etc.
- 162 individuals participated in corporate and/or ministry initiatives and received letters of recognition from the Public Service Commissioner. Thank you! ◄



Some of the ministries participating in the University of Alberta Careers Day 2006.

Ambassador Experiences ...

Students Want to Hear "Why", Not Just "How"

by Raeleen Siu, Classification Consultant, Personnel Administration Office

They expressed mild interest when I talked about job search techniques. Information about the hot job market was old news to them. What 35 University of Alberta students ranging from 2nd year Psychology to 4th year Human Resource Management majors sat straight up in their chairs for was information on why I was passionate about the field of Human Resources (HR).

For the Human Resources Career Forum at the U of A, I had prepared a speech that briefly mentioned my career path, touched on the vast number of HR jobs currently advertised throughout the province, discussed job search strategies, and focused on showing them how the Government of Alberta was a great employer. After, I was surprised that the students' questions were centered on why HR in the first place. I was pleased that they were seeking out information that would help them choose what to study and pursue in future years.

University of Alberta, Human Resources Career Forum.

One student approached me after the session and explained she had spent 2 years majoring in accounting, but something just wasn't fitting. She wasn't sure if she should switch her major to HR, given that she had invested so much time into accounting. No offense to accountants reading this article, because whether it was a doubt in accounting, communications, or another area of study, I would have told her the same! "Please do not tell me you would choose to become an accountant for the rest of your career, just because you invested 2 years studying it at university!" I said. Her response? She paused, I could see the light coming on, and then, "you're absolutely right."

It was nice to see so many students motivated to spend their Thursday evening at school. They didn't come with resumes, business cards, or any motive other than to hear about the Human Resources profession. I will remember for the next time that I am both an ambassador of the Government of Alberta, and also an ambassador for Human Resources. ◄

What Being an Ambassador Means to Me

by Bob Mitchell, Personal Directives Specialist, Seniors and Community Supports

I really enjoy my role as an Ambassador when talking with people at job/career fairs and the like. As an Alberta Government employee for almost 29 years and also from the perspective of representing government on such occasions, I see the Ambassador Program experience as being both *positive* and of great *potential.*

This experience is always a *positive* focus for me. I share with the enquirer that my employer is as good as it gets in the work world. My work with government has always been challenging with lots of action every working day. There is no excuse to be bored with work, as there is always another task or project to address. My colleagues in all the positions I have had with government are typically dedicated and supportive of the team. My supervisors over the years have worked long hours and really cared about the work and how my specific duties fit into the larger picture. Ours is an employer worth considering for a successful career. This is the *positive* message I wish to convey to every enquirer.

I also see every enquirer having great *potential* as a government employee. People considering a career with the Alberta Government should be viewed as possibly making a significant impact in their employment with government. With ever increasing complexities and stresses in the work place, our employer needs new ideas and experiences brought to the work site by individuals found at such fairs. Every person showing interest for a career with government could work out to be an outstanding staff contributing to very successful initiatives. As I encourage the seeker to apply for work with government, I see them as having great *potential* in a career with any of a wide range of job options. ◄

My Journey as an Ambassador

By Kevin Pundyk, Staffing Consultant, Personnel Administration Office

My journey as an Ambassador began in the summer of 2006. As a new employee to government, I was excited at the prospect of interacting with broad ranging audiences, and being on the other side of the table...no longer a student looking in, but an employee looking out.

As fall rolled around it wasn't long before I found myself at the University of Lethbridge interacting with other Ambassadors from across the APS and a cross-section of students. Definitely, the highlight of that first experience was getting to know other members of our organization, learning from them, and communicating with the student body. One thing I noticed was the enthusiasm with which each Ambassador shared his/her experiences in government. Not only did that energy come through in conversations with the student body but between Ambassadors as well.

Throughout 2006 and into 2007, I was fortunate to be involved in ten career fairs taking me as far south as Lethbridge (where the experience began) and as far north as Grande Prairie (where it concluded). The positive experience I lived at that first career fair carried on through each and every one.

I've met Ambassadors from many ministries, in many fields of work; I've met junior and senior high school students, college and university students, and many other adults already in the workforce; and I've met employees from other organizations. Simply put, being an Ambassador for an organization that I, as a university student, once wanted to work for has been a pleasure. I attribute much of my positive experience to the support of my Staffing Programs team at PAO who gave me the opportunity, as a new employee, to contribute to this program that greatly impacts our image as an employer.

I look forward to participating in the Ambassador Program for years to come. ◄

New Resources for Ambassadors

Ambassador Toolkit

A "Focus on Aboriginal People" section has been developed to support Ambassadors who participate in events that have an Aboriginal focus. The section includes information on Aboriginal cultural awareness, ministry Aboriginal programs, bursaries and resources, Aboriginal events, and Aboriginal Ambassador contacts. The Ambassador Program Toolkit is available at www.pao.gov.ab.ca/ambassador. Thank you to the Focus on Aboriginal People Sub-team members who contributed to the development of this resource: Carmen Parent, James Atkinson, Irene Milton, Phillip Lamouche, and Kim Smith. A special thank you to Gilman Cardinal for sharing his workshop information on Aboriginal cultural awareness with the Ambassador Program.

Banner Displays

The Ambassador Program has purchased 2 roll-up banner displays for use at career fairs, presentations, and other events. If the displays are not booked for corporate events, ministries may be able to use them. Please contact Kim Smith or Carrie Frey regarding their availability. ◄

Did you know?

In 2006-2007, over 81% of our job applicants indicated that they first heard about the job through the APS Jobs Website and 92% of our job applicants applied online. Various tools and resources continue to be incorporated into the Jobs website to promote the APS as a positive career choice. In our role as Ambassadors, we promote the APS Jobs Website to potential employees as a main source of job and career information with the Government of Alberta.

Alberta Public Service Jobs Website Update
www.jobs.alberta.ca

Student Summer Employment Registration Service - Re-opened February 1 and is available to students until August 1. The Registration Service promotes the one employer concept and provides students with an easy and efficient way to submit their resumes for potential summer employment opportunities with us. As of April 23, over 2,200 students interested in summer employment with the Government of Alberta submitted their resumes to the centralized database. Ministry Human Resource Offices have access to this student resume database to fill their summer student recruitment needs.

Online Brochure: Proudly Working Together in the Alberta Public Service - This brochure promotes the APS as a positive career choice and provides current and prospective employees with an overview of the Government of Alberta as an employer and what it has to offer in terms of career opportunities, pay and benefits, pension plans, vacation and holidays, values and ethics, continuous learning, workplace health, flexible work options, and recognition. If you are interested in obtaining a hard copy of the brochure, please contact your ministry Human Resource Office. ◄

Upcoming Events

- An Orientation Session for New Ambassadors is scheduled for Thursday, September 13, 2007 (details to follow in August).
- Notice of upcoming events/initiatives will be provided to Lead Ambassadors and/or published in the August edition of the newsletter. ◄

We Want to Hear From You!

We're interested in your thoughts and ideas! If you have suggestions for the Ambassador Program, feedback on the newsletter, and/or if you have an article that you would like to contribute, please contact kim.smith@gov.ab.ca.

The next edition of the Ambassadors in Action Newsletter will be in August 2007.